Exploitation of Polymetallic Nodules in Indian Ocean

@423-C. SHRI RAMKRISHNA MAZUMDER:

SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two mining sites covering a vast area with rich deposits of Polymetallic Nodules have been identified in the ocean bed in the centre of the Indian Ocean; and

(b) if so, what specific steps have since been taken for their exploitation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir. Two mines sites, each approximately of 150,000 sq. kilometers area, have been identified in the Central Indian Ocean.

(b) An application has been filed with the Preparatory Commission of the International Seabed Authority for allotment of one of the two sites to India. Research and Development work on mining will be undertaken as soon as the allotment has been made. Meanwhile, extensive survey and exploration work and laboratory scale extraction of metals from nodules are being carried out.

@Previously Unstarred Question 1449, transferred from the 9th May, 1986.

12.00 NOON

Papers laid on the Table

Assessment Report (1984-85) on the Porgramme and its implementation for accelarating the spread and development of Hindi

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Annual Assessment Report on the programme and its implementation for accelerating the spread and development of Hindi and its progressive use for the various official purposes of the Union for the year 1984-85.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT—2658/86]

Supreme Court Judges (Travelling Allowance) Amendment Rules, 1986

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (5) of section 24 of the Supreme Court Judges (Conditions of Service) Act, 1958, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Justice) Notification G.S.R. No. 175, dated the 8th March, 1986 publishing the Supreme Court Judges (Travelling Allowance) Amendment Rules, 1986. [Placed in Library, *See* No. 2661/86]

I. Consolidated Report (for the year ended the 31st December, 1984) on the working of Public Sector Banks

II. Notifications of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue).

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:—

I. A copy (in English and Hindi) of the Consolidated Report on the

Working of Public Sector Banks for the year ended the 31st December, 1984.

II. A copy (in English and Hindi) of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) Notification G.S.R. No. 624(E), dated the 14th April, 1986, publishing the Central Excise (10th Amendment) Rules, 1986, under sub-section (2) of section 38 of the Central Excises and Salt Act, 1944. [Placed in Library. *See* No. LT—2653/86 for I and II]

III. A copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Notifications of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue), under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962, together with Explanatory Memoranda on the Notifications:—

(i) G.S.R. No. 676(E), dated the 24th April, 1986, seeking to extend the concessional rate of Customs duty of 40 per cent *ad-valorem* to components used in the manufacture of certain specified electromedical equipments.

(ii) G.S.R. No. 677(E), dated the 24th April, 1986, amending notification No. 150—Customs, dated the 1st March, 1986, so as to prescribe revised rates of basic customs duty in respect of PVC resins.

(iii) G.S.R. Nos. 649(E), and 650 (E), dated the 24th April, 1986, exempting Video Cassettes and Video tapes of a predominantly educational character and falling within chapter 85 of the First Schedule to the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, from whole of the duty of Customs leviable thereon subject to fulfilment of conditions specified therein.

(iv) G.S.R. No. 683(E), dated the 25th April, 1986, prescribing the rate of exchange for conversion of Russian Rouble into Indian currency or *vice-versa*.

(v) G.S.R. Nos. 684(E) to 722(E), dated the 28th April, 1986, amending, re-issuing or rescinding certain exemption notifications of customs in order to replace the present procedure of execution of an end-use bond by the importers binding themselves to pay the differential duty in the case of their failure to use the goods for the purpose for which the exemption is granted, with the procedure of furnishing a simple undertaking in that behalf. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2655/86 for (i) to (v)].

IV. A copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Notifications of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) together with Explanatory Memoranda thereon:—

(i) G.S.R. Nos. 651(E) to 675(E), dated the 24th April, 1986, giving effect to the changes in the duties of excise announced by the Finance Minister while moving the Finance Bill for consideration in the Lok Sabha on the 24th April, 1986.

(ii) G.S.R. No. 681(E), dated the 25th April, 1986, exempting textile fabrics, impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with plastics and falling under heading No. 59.03 of the Schedule to the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985 from so much of the duty of excise leviable thereon under the Additional Duties of Excise (Goods of Special Importance) Act, 1957, as is in excess of the Amount calculated at the rate of 50 per cent of the rate of duty leviable thereon under the latter Act, read with any other notification issued under rule 8(1) of the Central Excise Rules, 1944, and subject to the provisos contained in the notification.

(iii) G.S.R. No. 682(E), dated the 25th April, 1986, amending Notification No. 273/86-Central Excise dated the 24th April, 1986 so as to clarify that for determining the rate of duty applicable to the fabrics mentioned in G.S.R. No. 681(E), the set-off notifications are not to be taken into account. [Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-2654/86 for (i) to (iii)].